



Program Administration and Management Guide

2023 - 2024

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Document Description and Contact Information

The YouthWorks administrative and management guide provides information needed for local program managers to implement YouthWorks in the targeted cities. The guide provides an overview of administrative and policy requirements to support quality program implementation.

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SECTION I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Overview: Section I describes the goal of YouthWorks the path model used for program implementation, how funding eligibility is determined along with which regions and cities are eligible for funding, and the cooperative nature of the YouthWorks grant and importance in designating a lead entity.

Subsections:

- PROGRAM SUMMARY
- PROGRAMMATIC ELEMENTS AND COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION
- EXPANDING PARTNERSHIP AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
- YOUTHWORKS PATH MODEL
- TIER 4

Relevant Best Practice from YouthWorks Program Assessment:

1 Develop a YouthWorks model that includes tiered offerings designed to meet the age and stage needs of participants.

Program Summary

The goal of the state's subsidized employment program, YouthWorks, is to provide an opportunity for at-risk youth while helping to ensure young people gain skills and experience to enter the workforce and begin to design a path towards a career. For the past 20+ years, 14 to 21-year-old income eligible teens and young adults from 31 Massachusetts cities have participated in one of the few state-funded youth employment programs in the country. As of 2022, the YouthWorks program provides that opportunity to young people up to the age of 25.

YouthWorks represents a statewide effort of local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and Career Centers partnering with businesses, state agencies and local community-based organizations to recruit, train, place, and supervise teens and young adults in job opportunities in public, nonprofit, and private-sector placements. The program continues to increase its reach and capacity by operating in additional priority communities with high rates of youth living in poverty.

2023 brings the first full-scale implementation of YouthWorks' new four-tiered developmental model focused on meeting the needs of participants in terms of age, stage, and path with the inclusion of *Emerging Workforce*, a pathway for participants between the ages of 18-25. The ongoing YouthWorks program is building off emerging best practices while also addressing lessons learned. The program model that aligns core programmatic goals and the YouthWorks tiered developmental model with an updated virtual and hybrid offering that combines the strength of statewide elements with the flexibility to embed local programming and work placement options.

Programmatic Elements and Collaborative Program Administration

YouthWorks partners should strive to provide participants with quality work and learning experiences that foster effective career development, build professional skills, self-awareness and to also connect participants to peers, community and future opportunities through supportive structures and quality case management. As a statewide partner, Commonwealth Corporation is committed to supporting grantees and local programs in providing programming of the highest quality.

Youthworks funding has expanded for the 2023-2024 year by \$11,250,000.00 and the number of participants served is expected to jump from 5,000 to 11,100. This is not the YouthWorks of the past – in terms of model design or funding levels.

Workforce Boards -- as leaders of the YouthWorks program statewide -- will be required to **expand their existing models and practices** to radically expand the number of young people enrolled in the upcoming year. **Boards should focus on bringing new business, community, and education partners to the table as they develop application packages.** The goal is to maintain the organizing and coordination structure offered by the consistent implementation of Youthworks through the MassHire Boards while radically growing the number of participants enrolled over the next year; this can only be accomplished by adding capacity to programming with new partners.

Expanding Partnership and Employer Engagement

As the Commonwealth Corporation continues its efforts to support the building of partnerships, networks, and relationships with businesses across the state, it is expected regions will continue their efforts in the expansion of partnerships as well. As YouthWorks continues in its growth in size, scope, and available resources, creating opportunities to reach and support participants relies on the strength of our partners to recruit, provide case management, and work experience opportunities in conjunction with their sub-grantees.

As we move into the 2023-2024 program year with the continued expansion of older participants, the expectation is partners will engage employers whose mission aligns with the YouthWorks program and/or state level partners with regional presences in which Commonwealth Corporation may be able to provide support.

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with schools with Chapter 74 approved vocational-technical programs, schools participating in MA College and Career Pathway Initiatives, community colleges, public agencies, employers, and community-based organizations focused on workforce development. Partnering business/organizations should align with regional labor market data and how the region plans to sustain or expand the programming in subsequent YouthWorks employment and training programs. Partnering organizations should, at the time of application, operate within the region of the applicant.

Programs focusing on a specific industry should consider the target population with the strongest skill set needed to explore the topic and make connections to an academic interest (e.g., language arts; numeracy; STEM). A program model that includes strategic pairing of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 so that subset of YouthWorks participants can experience a sustained and progressively sequenced set of work and learning experiences.

YouthWorks Path Model

YouthWorks programs serve a wide range of participants in terms of ages, levels of career awareness and goals. To provide all participants with effective and relevant workforce-development services, YouthWorks is divided into four specific tiers. The following charts articulate the program model and offerings.

Tier 4

To support the addition of our older participants, we have added a Tier 4 to the program model which focuses on participants between the ages of 22-25. **All regions are expected to identify and serve a target number of *Emerging Workforce* participants which includes Tier 3 and 4.** Tier 4 combined with Tier 3, is identified as *Emerging Workforce*. In Tier 4, participants are not limited by program hours. Instead, programs should specify a cohort start and end date of engagement which would include the completion of *Signal Success Emerging Workforce* modules. At their completion, programs should be prepared to provide direct assistance in the identification and interviewing of Tier 4 participants for part or full-time work. Participants in Tier 4 should complete the program certified in First Aid and CPR. Programs should plan to engage these participants in case management that includes but is not limited to career exploration, skills assessment, and a pathway to employment.

For this Tier, the goal is to place participants at worksites who are looking to hire while providing them the foundation to the start of their career and professional mentorship.

YouthWorks Age, Stage and Path Model

Tier 1: Service and Project-Based Learning: <i>Signal Success: Starting off Strong</i>	Tier 2: Early and Career-Trajectory Experience <i>Signal Success: Building a Professional Self</i>	Emerging Workforce	
		Tier 3: Career Pathway Training and Support: <i>Signal Success: Crafting a Career Path</i>	Tier 4: Career Pathway Credentialing and Certifications: <i>Signal Success: Emerging into Career and Career Management</i>
<p>14-15-year-old participants</p> <p>Wage range: \$15.00 – \$16.25/hr.</p> <p><u>Cycle 1 Period: June – September 3</u></p> <p>60-130 program hours</p> <p><u>Cycle 2 Period: September 4 – June</u></p> <p>40-300 program hours</p>	<p>16-17-year-old participants</p> <p>Wage range: \$16.25 – \$17.50/hr.</p> <p><u>Cycle 1 Period: June – September 3</u></p> <p>100-220 program hours</p> <p><u>Cycle 2 Period: September 4 – June</u></p> <p>40-300 program hours</p>	<p>18-21-year-old participants</p> <p>Wage range: \$17.50 – \$18.75/hr.</p> <p><u>Cycle 1 Period: June – September 3</u></p> <p>120-320 program hours</p> <p><u>Cycle 2 Period: September 4 – June</u></p> <p>40-420 program hours</p>	<p>22-25-year-old participants</p> <p>Wage range: \$18.75 – \$20.00/hr.</p> <p>Region specific cohorts expanding three (3) to four (4) months of programming, ideally, that aligns with the start of each Cycle</p>

	Tier 1: Service and Project-Based Learning: <i>Signal Success: Starting off Strong</i>	Tier 2: Early and Career-Trajectory Experience <i>Signal Success: Building a Professional Self</i>	Emerging Workforce	
			Tier 3: Career Pathway Training and Support: <i>Signal Success: Crafting a Career Path</i>	Tier 4: Career Pathway Credentialing and Certifications: <i>Signal Success: Emerging into Career and Career Management</i>
What are the key components?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management and wrap-around services, as needed • Service-learning projects coordinated with local community partners and/or supportive small group introductory work placements • Sector aligned project-based learning intensives with additional supports for younger participants • Cohort-based case management • Match participants with learning opportunities that foster transferable skills and early career pipeline programming with specific employer partnerships • Optional: Engage participants in additional topic specific learning opportunities that correlate with age and stage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management and wrap-around services, as needed • Introduction to career exploration through volunteerism and civic engagement • Introduction to targeted transferable skill development • Begin career pathway planning • Interview practice – engaging in Talk Hiring platform – and individual personal branding focused on skills, interests, and assets • Support returning participants with growth opportunities that involve increased leadership, independence, and/or stronger alignment to career interests – consider Peer Leadership opportunities • Defined career exploration activities that support increased awareness of in-demand industries • Optional: Engage participants in additional topic specific learning opportunities that correlate with age and stage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management and wrap-around services, as needed • Occupational training models with relevant industry certifications • Mentorship via professionals in field of interest • Engage in micro career pathway course(s) focused on a specific career or industry • Work-based learning and skills training linked to pre-apprenticeship certification • Match participants with employment and learning opportunities that foster transferable skills – private sector focus • Engage participant in leadership opportunities • Interview practice – engaging in Talk Hiring platform – and individual personal branding focused on skills, interests, and assets • Job placements focused on a particular industry and supported by additional career awareness and exploration activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management and wrap-around services, as needed • Occupational training models with relevant industry certifications • Structured, career specific, mentorship • Placement with business/organizations looking to hire • Identified full- or part-time employment at the completion of the program • Support returning participants with growth opportunities that involve increased leadership – consider peer mentorship opportunities within YW programming • Interview practice – engaging in Talk Hiring platform – and individual personal branding focused on skills, interests, and assets • Support returning participants with marketable skills and increased opportunity • CPR/First Aid training • Optional: design Micro Career Pathway comparable courses that align with WIOA adult training

Funding Eligibility for Grantees

Funds have been targeted to the cities in Massachusetts that have high numbers of youth in poverty, where low- income youth are especially in need of ensuring access to job opportunities. These cities are part of a larger “workforce investment region” represented by a workforce development board. The cities eligible for funding and their total funding award are outlined in the table below. There are no prescribed target.

2023-2024 YouthWorks Awards Table¹

Region (Priority Cities)	Award	10% Match
Berkshire (Pittsfield)	\$645,414.44	\$64,541.00
Boston (Boston)	\$8,192,185.86	\$819,218.00
Bristol (Attleboro, Fall River, Taunton)	\$2,000,803.30	\$20,080.33
Cape & Islands (Barnstable)	\$55,656.97	\$5,565.69
Central Mass (Worcester)	\$4,534,964.30	\$453,496.43
Franklin Hampshire (Northampton)	\$241,697.00	\$24,169.70
Greater Brockton (Brockton)	\$1,334,773.34	\$133,477.33
Greater Lowell (Lowell)	\$2,000,500.56	\$200,050.06
Greater New Bedford (New Bedford)	\$1,251,395.46	\$125,139.55
Hampden County (Chicopee, Springfield, Holyoke, Westfield)	\$4,000,240.00	\$400,024.00
Merrimack Valley (Lawrence, Haverhill)	\$2,003,756.17	\$200,375.61
Metro North (Cambridge, Chelsea, Malden, Somerville, Revere, Everett)	\$3,520,355.64	\$352,035.66
Metro South/West (Framingham, Waltham)	\$1,158,480.42	\$115,848.04
North Central (Leominster)	\$405,207.00	\$40,520.70
North Shore (Lynn, Salem, Peabody)	\$2,046,924.00	\$204,692.40
South Shore (Quincy, Plymouth, Weymouth)	\$975,710.63	\$97,571.06

¹ YouthWorks funding awards are based on application review scoring outlined in the RFP.

SECTION II: CONTRACTING INFORMATION

Section Overview: Section II sets out the contractual obligations of YouthWorks grantees, specifying the fund distribution of youth-related expenditure and personnel and administrative costs, the definition of allowable expenses, financial match expectations and documentation procedures, regional support participation requirement, and how to submit modifications for contracts.

Subsections:

- ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES
- FINANCIAL MATCH REQUIREMENTS AND DOCUMENTATION
- TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTICIPATION
- CONTRACT MODIFICATIONS

Relevant Best Practices from YouthWorks Program Assessment

- #1 Develop a YouthWorks model that includes tiered offerings designed to meet the age and stage needs of participants.
- #2 Provide quality placements in a variety of sectors and industries.
- #3 Establish clear worksite agreements, payroll procedures, safety guidelines and reporting methods for violations and/or grievances
- #4 Effectively manage, track, and report resources and program data

Allowable Expenditures, Safe, and Appropriate Working Environments

Focus on Youth Wage: Across the full budget of the grant at least 60% of overall funding must be spent on youth wages, stipends, and support services. A maximum of 40% of the total funds may be spent on the following:

- Salaries and related personnel costs of outreach, counseling, instructional and job site supervisory staff.

Note: No funds provided under this program may be used to support the salaries of existing permanent staff at any agency or facility at which youth are employed other than for that portion of their time which these staff spend supervising youth who are assigned directly to them; all such time allocations must be fully documented and are subject to approval by Commonwealth Corporation.

- All subsidized placements in the YouthWorks program must include an hourly wage no less than the Massachusetts minimum wage of \$15.00/hr. All hourly wages must align with the tiered wage ranges provided
- Prior to the start of participants engaging at a worksite, site supervisors must provide a comprehensive orientation including but not limited to the use of safety equipment and any tools/equipment which will be used by participants
- Programs must pay an hourly wage or provide a comparable stipend for participation in all programming components. Programs should make every effort to maximize the financial benefits offered to participants through wages, stipends, and appropriate program incentives

For more information, please refer to Attachment Three Youth Works Guidance on Stipends and Incentives.

- Whether participants are visiting a worksite for a few hours or are placed there for the whole program, all work sites must be safe and appropriate spaces for all program participants. Work sites that demonstrate bias against specific populations should not be considered for program participation. All programs must have clear and participant-friendly support policies to prevent harassment in the workplace and address any issues that may arise
- Worksites sponsored by faith-based organizations may not engage participants in activities that are religious in nature. For example, it is not appropriate for YouthWorks participants to be asked to teach religious studies.

Note: All participants taking part in traditional in-person placements or employer-structured work from home placements **must have a valid work permit**. Participants engaging in virtual career development programming or occupational training courses only do not need work permits because this programming constitutes a learning experience rather than a job.

Allowable expenses include:	Non-allowable expenses include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing/uniforms for vocational programming/employment • Electronic devices such as laptops, webcams, and Chromebooks and internet access support services • Transportation for youth participants • Bus/train passes • Van/bus rental • Vocational, or supplemental career readiness materials including certification materials and testing fees • Food for youth participants • Youth stipends/wages • Gift cards or other financial incentives (such as bonuses) for youth are permissible to a maximum of \$350 per participant for the duration of the grant period if they are tied to program milestones and do not occur in any single increment greater than \$100. • Computer software • Equipment rental • Cell phone reimbursement for the program staff persons serving YouthWorks participants • Youth and employer outreach materials • Mileage for program staff (for the YouthWorks grant) in relation to services rendered under the YouthWorks grant. Reimbursement will be provided for mileage only (at the current reimbursement rate of the grantee's fiscal agent) • In some cases, GED or HiSET testing fees and driver's licenses/state identification may be expended with prior approval from Commonwealth Corporation • Salaries and related personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff bonuses, incentives and/or gifts • Equipment (defined as any item of tangible personal property having a per-unit cost greater than \$5,000 and a useful economic life of more than three years). Property purchased with grant funds and used for grant purposes that does not meet the definition of 'equipment' would fall into the budget category of supplies and materials • Indirect costs that exceed 10% of the total budget • Mileage reimbursement not related to the YouthWorks grant • Any expenses more than the contracted grant amount or outside the contracted grant period • Any expenses outside of the approved budget

costs of outreach, counseling, instructional and job site supervisory staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other costs directly related to the program 	
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Unemployment Insurance: Based on information from the Division of Revenue Service at the MA Department of Unemployment Assistance, we have determined that YW partners are not required to report the earnings or pay contributions to the Division of Revenue Service for YouthWorks participants. YouthWorks participants are excluded by Section 6(u) of the Massachusetts Unemployment Insurance Law that states participants in a work-training program are not in a position of “employment.”²

Appropriate balance between workforce boards and their vendors: Commonwealth Corporation expects all boards to consider how best to distribute administrative funding resources in an equitable manner. All programs that provide core services such as recruitment, case management and program implementation must have a vendor tab in the program budget. Instances where vendors are not resourced appropriately will lead to requests for application and budget revisions and delay contracting.

Financial Match Expectations

Grantees are not required to provide a cash match for program expenditures; however, the YouthWorks appropriation specifies that funds provided by the General Court shall be matched by private organizations. The Commonwealth expects each grantee to generate a private-sector match equal to 10% of the final contract amount. The match can be achieved through grant contributions made by private-sector employers to the workforce region or through private-sector wages paid to youth who are eligible for YouthWorks.

Private-sector employers includes private-sector enterprises and private nonprofit organizations such as private hospitals, colleges, universities, and others.

How should YW partners document matches?

- Private-sector matches that are made via wages/stipends should be documented using the YouthWorks Wage Match Form.
 - This format provides the names of youth; the start and end dates worked; the total hours worked during the period indicated by the start and end dates; and the wage/stipend paid per hour. The format should also provide the total dollar amount for the individual or groups of individuals.
- Matches made through grants or donations (cash or in-kind gifts) should be recorded on the Donations and Grants tab on the Match Form.
 - They can be documented with a copy of the check or letter from the employer indicating value of the in-kind donation
 - Employer signatures are not required on the form; program manager’s signature is required.

² The related language from the law reads as follows: “Section 6. The term “employment” shall not include:

(u) Service performed as part of an unemployment work-relief or work-training program assisted or financed in whole or in part by any federal agency or an agency of a state or political subdivision thereof or an Indian tribe, by an individual receiving such work relief or work training;”

Can YW partners count any wage portion paid by employers to YW participants as a financial match? If the private-sector employer(s) pays partial wage or stipend for YouthWorks participants, this amount can be applied toward the match requirement. This includes the Connecting Activities program.

Note: YouthWorks is a state subsidized youth employment program. While the placement of youth in job opportunities that are paid for by private-sector employers is a valuable local outcome, if the targeted YouthWorks city/workforce area does not partially subsidize the wages and/or stipends for youth, the youth should not be counted as YouthWorks participants. If the private-sector employer(s) pays the full wage or stipend for youth who are YouthWorks eligible, this amount can be applied toward the match requirement.

Period of Performance

The contracts for programs that submit complete applications in a timely manner will be issued with a period of performance of April 3, 2023, through June 30, 2024. Expenditures charged to the grant must be for program activity and services rendered during this period. All such contracted funds must be expended by June 30, 2024. Funds unexpended after that date will revert to the Commonwealth.

Lead applicants are expected to make every effort to provide vendor sub-contracts within 21 days of signing their contract with Commonwealth Corporation.

Regional Support Engagement

Program regional support is based on YouthWorks performance standards which have been established to support shared understandings of promising practices in subsidized youth training and employment programs. A regional support person will be an assigned staff member from Commonwealth Corporation. There will be a range of group-based regional support offerings that guide practice and develop local leadership and innovation. Consistent participation in statewide, regional, and local support gatherings is a requirement of the YouthWorks' grant. The following list provides details about the regional support services.

- 1) Monthly meetings with regional leads and YouthWorks leadership team
- 2) Statewide regional support and updates convening in October 2023 and March 2024
- 3) Four, total, site visits to take place throughout the programming year
- 4) Complete reporting in database including but not limited to matching of participants to worksites and Participant Completion Screen
- 5) Individualized regional support via meetings and calls will support grantees in effective program design, implementation, and assessment.
- 6) Identify appropriate staff to attend *Signal Success* fundamentals training

Contract Modifications

A budget modification request is required for the following proposed changes to your contract:

- Changes to the type or amount of budget line items listed on your contract Budget Form if the change is over 10% of the budget line

A **budget modification** must be submitted by the region lead to the YouthWorks team (youthworks@commcorp.org) with the director and Regional Support Manager cc'ed. Your RSM may also require a contract modification for other changes that constitute a significant revision to the project scope or budget. Grantees are encouraged to discuss potential changes with their Commonwealth Corporation

¹ The YouthWorks Training & Events Calendar is always updated with new information. Please check the YouthWorks website frequently to stay abreast of what's happening throughout the year

RSM prior to submitting a modification request. If you have any questions about whether a change to your project requires modification, we encourage you to consult your RSM. Once your modification request is approved, Commonwealth Corporation will contact the region lead with a modified contract to the grantee to be signed by the grantee's authorized signatory.

SECTION III: RECRUITMENT AND ELIGIBILITY

Section Overview: Section III highlights the importance of using different strategies for engaging with participants, denotes the eligibility criteria and target population along with how to document eligibility and target population factors, and completion requirements.

Subsections:

- RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, AND CASE MANAGEMENT
- DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
- ELIGIBILITY OF A PARTICIPANT
- DOCUMENTING INCOME ELIGIBILITY AND RISK FACTORS
- PARTICIPANT AND COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Recruitment, Enrollment, and Case Management

Programs are encouraged to think through how recruitment, enrollment, and case management needs to be accomplished differently for programming.

It is essential to avoid imposing additional or exacerbating existing barriers, so **all programs should plan to provide participants who need a device to access programming with a Chromebook or entry-level laptop as well as resources to access hot spots or other internet services.** In many cases this may be a greater need among out-of-school participants. Finally, all programs need to identify additional modes of case management beyond email and voice mail. Layering in text-based communication, dedicated live online small group case management and team-based communication through tools like Slack and MS Teams increases engagement and persistence among participants because it provides multiple avenues to access support.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As a leader in workforce development, Commonwealth Corporation is committed to having Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion embedded into the programs and services we offer, reflected in the people we impact and our workplace culture. Our vision of a society where upward economic mobility is possible for all—cannot be accomplished alone, but through the collective efforts and support of our staff, partners, board members and the communities in which we live and serve. To that end, programs are expected to serve vulnerable participants who can self-attest to the one or more of the following, at-risk, factors:

1. court-involved;
2. DYS-committed, on juvenile probation, gang-involved, CRS, juvenile arrest;
3. homelessness or being a runaway;
4. foster care or being close to aging out of foster care; having aged out of foster care;
5. poor academic performance or a school stop-out;
6. single parent household;
7. having a disability or special needs;
8. lack of fluency in English, or being a foreign immigrant; or
9. being a teen parent.

Risk Factor Definition	Acceptable Documentation
A history of juvenile delinquency – either having the status of ‘court involved’, in the custody of DYS, on juvenile court probation, CHINS status, or gang involved	Court and police records, letter of parole, letter from probation officer or DYS caseworker or referral from community-based organization with proven capacity for servicing gang-involved youth
Poor academic performance or a school dropout	School records such as grades or MCAS results, attendance/dropout letter from school; for out-of-school youth school records dated in the prior two years could be use as well as local assessment such as the TABE
Homelessness or being a runaway	Written statement from an individual providing temporary residence, letter from shelter or EOHHS agency

Having aged out of foster care, or being close to aging out of foster care	Court documents or letter from EOHHS agency
Being the child of a single parent	Applicant statement of household size
Having a disability or special needs	School records, medical records, observable condition, or letter from social service agency
Lack of fluency in English, or being a documented immigrant	School records, teacher or Community-Based-Organization referral, or local assessment of English-language proficiency
Being a teen parent	Birth certificate, school records, referral, or letter from social services agency

Eligibility of Participants

Participation in a YouthWorks employment program is limited to residents of the workforce regions who meet four eligibility requirements: age, income, risk factors, and/or geographic residence. There is no official limit on the amount of grant funds dedicated to serving eligible participants who reside outside of one of the priority cities.

Age Requirements

Age: A participant is eligible to participate in the YouthWorks program if they are between the ages of 14 and 25, at least, sometime during the period of programming. A participant must be, at least, 14 at the start of programming. The Commonwealth urges program managers to make special efforts to recruit and serve *Emerging Workforce* participants who are disconnected from work and education. Participants are not required to be enrolled in a secondary school to be eligible for the YouthWorks program. Program participants taking part in a work placement must be 14 and obtain a work permit prior to the start of the placement. Programs can reach out to discuss situations where individuals outside the recommended age range for the tier would be a strong fit for those services. A participant is not required to be enrolled in a secondary school to be eligible for YouthWorks employment.

Income: In the 2023-2024 program year, a participant should have a family income that does not exceed the annual equivalent of 200% of the Federal poverty guidelines. The 2022 federal poverty guidelines are included in the Appendices which was the most updated document at the time of this document's release. Because free lunch has been implemented across the state, local program administrators should be prepared to request proof of status with self-attestation serving as a source.

The 2022 Federal Poverty Guidelines are outlined in [Appendix 1](#). Local program administrators may use appropriate methods of documenting family income as described below. For youth who are still enrolled in school, local administrators can accept evidence of eligibility for free lunch or reduced lunch under the federal program and/or a self-attestation form in [Appendix 2](#). [Note: The income level necessary to qualify for a reduced lunch is 185% of poverty level.]

Documenting Income Eligibility and Risk Factors

Local program administrators are encouraged to use appropriate methods of documenting family income and risk factors, and to establish board-approved policies related to documenting eligibility criteria for income and risk factors.

Documenting Income Eligibility

The table below outlines how to document income eligibility for participants.

Youth School Enrollment Status	Income Eligibility documentation
<i>In-school youth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For youth enrolled in public school, evidence that the school has determined a student's eligibility for a "reduced price lunch," or "free lunch", under the federal free or reduced-price lunch program confirms eligibility for YouthWorks If students attend a school or district that provides free lunch to all students, programs can use confirmation of the school policy to document eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In these cases, it is recommended that programs also use an additional method such as self-attestations.
<i>Out-of-school participants or youth for whom administrative records regarding the federal lunch program are not available</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant statements of household income and household size (e.g., number of siblings and parents/guardians) may be used as evidence of household income to determine eligibility for youth "Full documentation" could follow the WIOA eligibility procedures – soliciting copies of parental payroll records or tax records, etc. If a youth is out-of-school for only a short period (1-2 years) grantees may provide evidence of eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch that covered the time they were enrolled in school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This information can be used in combination with self-attestation to meet documentation requirements

Note for grantees relying primarily on youth self-attestation:

In this case, grantees should follow procedures to statistically check whether such statements of income are accurate. The purpose of this check is to confirm the accuracy of the eligibility process, not necessarily to disqualify any individual.

Note: Income documentation is not required for youth who are documented as housing insecure, in foster care, or for youth with disabilities or special needs.

Participation and Completion Requirements

All participants should be paid for work and training, including orientation, hours with grant funds.

Participants enrolled in Cycle 1 Period (June 2023 – September 3, 2023)

For a participant to be counted they must have engaged in at least 10 program hours. Participants may take part in programming for as little as five (5) weeks and as many as nine (9) weeks. Programs need to be mindful to support participants with feasible schedules that offer opportunities for substantial skill gain without interfering with educational requirements for in-school youth including summer school.

For participants to be considered completers, they must complete at least 60 programmatic hours. Of these hours...

- Career readiness hours are based on participant engagement; however, in addition to *Signal Success* participants may engage in other career readiness activities:
 - Participants who engage in program activities in Cycle 1 only are expected to complete 15 total hours of career readiness training. Of those 15 hours, at least, 10 must be *Signal Success*. The remaining five (5) hours can be of career readiness activities relevant to the participants' tier such as Job Skills, Career Chats, and/or materials to complement *Signal Success* curriculum.
- All participants must take part in at least one of the below:
 - Service Based Learning, Work Placement, Project Based Learning
 - or
 - Micro Career Pathway Courses (required for Tier 3 and 4 participants in Cycle 1)

Participants enrolled in Cycle 2 Period (September 4, 2023 – June 30, 2024)

For a participant to be counted they must have received at least 10 program hours. Participants can take part in programming for as little as nine (9) weeks and as many as 20 weeks. Programs need to be mindful to support participants with feasible schedules that offer opportunities for substantial skill gain without interfering with educational requirements for in-school participants. For example, a Tier 1 or 2 participant might benefit from a 10-week program with an average of four (4) hours a week while an older out-of-school participant in Tiers 3 or 4 may participate all of Cycle 2 for an average of 15 hours a week or more. Tier 3 participants may complete up to 320 paid hours of programming.

For participants to be considered completers, they must complete at least 40 program hours. Program plans can range from as little as 40 hours to as many as 320 hours. Of these hours:

- Participants who engage only in activities in Cycle 2 September through June 30 period are expected to complete 25 total hours of career readiness training. Of those 25 hours, at least, 20 must be *Signal Success*. The remaining five (5) hours can be of career readiness activities relevant to the participants' tier such as Job Skills, Career Chats, and/or materials to complement *Signal Success* curriculum.
- All participants must take part in at least one of the below:
 - Service Based Learning, Work Placement, Project Based Learning
 - or
 - Micro Career Pathway Courses (required for Tier 3 and 4 participants in Cycle 1)

Participants enrolled between June 2023 – June 30, 2024²

For a participant to be counted they must have engaged in at least 10 program hours. Participants may take part in programming for as little as 10 weeks and as many as 20 weeks. Programs need to be mindful to support participants with feasible schedules that offer opportunities for substantial skill gain without interfering with educational requirements for in-school youth. For example, a Tier 1

² Participants who engage in both cycles can be counted in a region's target as two participants.

participant might benefit from a five (5) week program with an average of 15 hours a week while an older participant in Tier 3 may participate across the program year for an average of 25 hours a week. Please see above for hours of paid programming a participant can engage in based on Tier.

If a participant engages in program activities throughout the entire program year, they are expected to engage in a combined total of, at least, 30 hours of career readiness programming over the course of the year. Of those 30 hours, at least, 25 must be *Signal Success*. The remaining five (5) hours can be of career readiness activities relevant to the participants' tier such as Job Skills, Career Chats, and/or materials to complement *Signal Success* curriculum.

Note: All participants are required to sign off on the "Participation Agreement" in the database and the "YouthWorks Participant Handbook" which should be provided to participants in hard copy or virtually. Both documents can be found in the YouthWorks Portal.

SECTION IV: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Section Overview: Section IV sets out the process for and elements required for program implementation. Specifically, it details key dates for program implementation, the collaborative process for program administration between Commonwealth Corporation and program managers, how to leverage peer leaders, and the required program elements.

Subsections:

- PROGRAMMATIC ELEMENTS AND COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION
- PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
- UTILIZATION OF PEER LEADERS

Relevant Best Practices from YouthWorks Program

Assessment:

#1 Implement effective programming for 14/15-year-olds in the form of project-based and service learning through cohort models and supportive small group placements

#2 Implement/ offer high-quality occupational skills training that provides youth with relevant skills for in-demand occupations

#3 Plan and effectively implement program orientation and work-readiness curriculum

#4 Provide engaging, well-organized, responsive facilitation of work-readiness curriculum

#5 Follow-up with youth on a regularly through site visits, facilitated reflections, informal check-ins, and relevant follow-up and transition services

#6 Build successful placement experiences by considering youth and employer input and providing strategic support to employers

Programmatic Elements and Collaborative Program Administration

YouthWorks partners should strive to provide participants with quality work and learning experiences that foster effective career development, build professional skills, self-awareness and to also connect participants to peers, community and future opportunities through supportive structures and quality case management. As a statewide partner, Commonwealth Corporation is committed to supporting grantees and local programs in providing programming of the highest quality.

Programmatic Element	What does CommCorp Provide?	What is the role of the grantee and local program providers?
Required Elements for All Participants Across All Tiers		
<i>Signal Success</i> Career Readiness	<p>All online self-paced modules – participants can develop career readiness on demand</p> <p>Design and provide facilitation training for regional <i>Signal Success</i> facilitators</p> <p>Provide guidance for the integration of learning between the in-person and virtual <i>Signal Success</i> modalities</p> <p>Provide curriculum in multiple languages</p>	<p>Reinforce and encourage successful career development via case management</p> <p>Review participant progress and provide feedback to their self-paced work in addition to ensuring participants are meeting required <i>Signal Success</i> hours</p> <p>Facilitate live <i>Signal Success</i> curriculum within local programming</p> <p>Ensure the completion of <i>Signal Success</i>/career readiness hours as outlined in the RFP</p>
Career Exploration	<p>Organization and facilitation of statewide online Career Chats and Alumni Panels</p> <p>Support partnership building between private sector employers and local programming</p> <p>Employer sponsors and professional advisors to embed career exploration in project-based learning intensives</p>	<p>Support participant attendance at CommCorp facilitated events such as Career Chats and encourage professional follow-up among participants.</p> <p>Attend and support participation in a Career Chat(s)</p> <p>Provide the information for, at least, one local volunteer and/or staff member willing to speak at a Career Chat.</p> <p>Plan and facilitate additional local career-exploration offerings</p> <p>Encourage participants to engage in, at least, one Career Chat.</p>
Interview Preparation and Personal Branding Coaching	<p>Provide interview-skill-building sessions, access to online mock interviewing preparation tool and personal branding learning modules</p>	<p>Organize live and/or virtual mock interviews and identify professionals willing to participate</p> <p>Encourage participants to use Talk Hiring for mock interview practice connected to their field of interest</p>

Case Management	Guiding tools, training, and regional support	Organize and conduct regular one-on-one and group check-ins to support success
	Access to technology solutions to address gap in technology accessibility	Through case management, address barriers and provide referrals as needed

Programmatic Element (Relevant Tier)	What does CommCorp Provide?	What is the role of the grantee and local program providers?
All participants must take part in at least one of these, but they may also participate in more than one. Programs should make every attempt to align approach by participant need and programmatic tier.		
Service- Based Learning (Tier One)	Support on-going effective service learning projects Common assessment tools to track outcomes	Building internal capacity or partnering with local Community Based Organizations or schools to structure and facilitate virtual, in-person, or hybrid service-learning projects
Subsidized Work Placements (Mainly Tiers Three & Four, some Tier Two)	Common assessment tools to track outcomes Guidance and regional support on employer engagement, how to structure virtual opportunities and tools for supporting alignment to safety protocols	Identifying, developing, and monitoring supportive placements that include mentoring - provided by an experienced individual in the field - and support for participants In the case of shorter placements, aligning them to additional opportunities like Career Chats and Micro Career Pathway courses, when offered Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan
Sector-Aligned Project-Based Learning (Mainly Tier One & Two with some Tier Three)	Development of resources and tools to support age-and-stage-appropriate work and outcomes across the four tiers Coordination of cross-program peer gatherings Toolkits and guides to facilitate programming	Facilitation of the PBL groups which should include regular, live whole-group and small-group Zoom sessions and in-person projects Recruitment and coordination with employer partners and professionals to serve as project advisors and when appropriate project “clients”
Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan (Mainly Two with some Tier One & Three – participants receiving, at least, 60 hours of subsidized work)	Integrated space in the YouthWorks database	Job description, list of skills, and feedback/reviews to participate Employer engagement orientation and support services that help employers understand the goals of the program and the needs of the participants.

Micro Career Pathway Courses (Tiers Three & Four)	<p>Identify, vet, and coordinate asynchronous career pathway courses to provide alignment to in-demand fields</p> <p>Maximize utilization of state funds by negotiating group rates and offering access to courses without additional costs to local programs</p> <p>Whenever possible, support course alignment to LinkedIn skills assessments and other certifications to help participants build their online skill portfolios</p>	<p>Support enrollment based on interest and fit</p> <p>Work with training partners and participants to ensure the necessary technology and internet access is available</p> <p>Support attendance, participation, and completion by establishing stipends and incentives, providing encouragement, and removing barriers</p> <p>Align participant programs so career pathway courses connect to placements/PBLs</p> <p>Design Micro Career Pathway comparable courses that align with WIOA adult training for participants ages 21 - 25 where applicable</p>
Peer Leaders (Tiers Two, Three, & Four)	<p>Provide training for recruiting, hiring, and training of peer leaders for your program</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for returning and/or older participants to practice leadership and project management skills, while also serving as peer mentors to younger participants - at least one peer leader for every 12 projected participants</p> <p>Provide resources for additional professional development and trainings such as First Aid and CPR</p>

Utilization of Peer Leaders

One of the most promising practices across the YouthWorks partner network is the strategic use of peer leaders. Peer leadership roles provide opportunities for returning and/or older participants to practice leadership and project management skills, while also serving as peer mentors to younger participants. All programs are strongly encouraged to recruit and support at least one peer leader for every 12 projected participants. The peer leaders can support some staff implementation tasks while also benefiting from the learning components of the program. Commonwealth Corporation will provide training for recruiting, hiring, and training of peer leaders for your program. Peer Leadership sessions are an added resource for peer leaders, these sessions will continue to be facilitated by Commonwealth Corporation. The June start date of programming has been incorporated into programming to provide support and guidance to Peer Leaders before the official kick-off of Cycle 1 in July.

- 1) **Group-based trainings for Peer Leaders will take place in late June through August and October 2023, and December 2023.**

program. Programs may elect to pay peer leaders a higher wage and should include this information in their budget narrative.

Additional Information about *Signal Success*

Signal Success is an interactive curriculum built around learning targets that support participants in short-term work placements and in their broader career development. In addition, the curriculum enables local staff to provide support for consistent delivery of work-readiness content that is relevant and engaging, addresses employers' needs, and provides workshop facilitators with a clear instructional methodology.

Key benefits defined include the following:

- **Well-defined instructional methodology** that supports targeted work-readiness skills and/or competencies. Each workshop has a similar format that helps facilitators support effective learning and streamline preparation time to focus on successful implementation rather than on workshop planning and content creation.
- **Skill development** focused on four areas identified by O*Net data and by other research as key skill requirements of entry-level occupations—jobs in which teens have been typically employed. The four skills are:
 - Dependability
 - Communication
 - Collaboration
 - Initiative
- **Task-oriented participant interaction** in groups and pairs that mirror the world of work, and support learning in multiple modalities and learning styles.
- **A sense of accountability** and performance associated with a workplace ethic. Participants are expected to complete work/portfolio products and to incorporate practice of the four target skills during workshop time.

SECTION V: POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Section Overview: Section V delineates general policies and best practices for program administration. Concretely, it describes provides best practices for service- and work-based learning, resources for connecting with other youth-service programs, and the information security policy Commonwealth Corporation and grantees are subject to, along with requirements for adhering to the policy.

Subsections: <ul style="list-style-type: none">BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVICE-LEARNING AND WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCESPROGRAM AND RESOURCE CONNECTIONSINFORMATION SECURITY POLICYSITE VISITS, QUALITY ASSURANCE, AND MONITORING	Relevant Best Practice from YouthWorks Program Assessment: #7. Raise the profile of the program by participating
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Best Practices for Service-Based Learning and Work-Based Learning Experiences

Best Practices for Service-Based Learning:

- Develop clear and measurable learning outcomes for the project and relevant assessments to measure and record outcomes
- Integrate key members of the local community into the process and project so that participants have a clear sense of purpose, audience, and impact
- Adding accountability and a professional aspect to the learning by having students develop descriptions and then revisit these documents along with a work-based learning evaluation tool on a regular basis
- Include ongoing and simple practices to gauge student perspectives by creating intentional spaces for participants to reflect and discuss their experience. Ensuring these activities occur in a range of modalities and settings will garner the most traction. For example, programs are likely to get different information in a whole group sharing session about highlights and challenges of the week than in a short, written feedback survey
- Intentionally include ways for participants to change or expand their experience.
- Build in opportunities to regularly respond to case management needs. Whether it is part of a weekly staff meeting or the end of the day wrap-up text or email exchange, staff need time to respond to what they are observing. Especially in cases where participants are struggling or starting to disengage, early intervention is essential

Best Practices for Work-Based Learning Experiences:

- Active employer engagement and workforce development focused on identifying and developing quality work placements
- Clear and inclusive recruitment processes include assessing potential participants' interests and skills, and then utilizing this intake information to complete thoughtful job placement matches.
- Transparency with employers and participants upfront about the need for contingency plans for in-person placements that may need to transition to virtual or pause in the case of COVID-19 exposures or pre-emptive public health measures.
- Employer engagement orientation and support services that help employers understand the goals of the program and the needs of the participants.
- Agreement with employers about what types of tools and strategies will be used to promote accountability and support for remote or hybrid placements.
- Coordination with local Connecting Activities, WIOA, and Innovation Pathway programs to support an integrated approach to comprehensive career development for youth and young adults.

Program and Resource Connections

Connecting Activities: YouthWorks is committed to making intentional connections with the statewide Connecting Activities program (CA). Connecting Activities funds pay for staff to recruit employers; prepare and place students in work-based learning opportunities such as YouthWorks; and structure those experiences using the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan. Information about Connecting Activities is available at <http://www.massconnecting.org/>. Suggestions for aligning YouthWorks and Connecting Activities include the following:

- Program managers work with CA staff in local high schools to provide outreach information about YouthWorks programming
- Find out what students in local YW/CA high schools are at risk of stopping out, becoming homeless, or in DYS or DCF custody. Ensure that that school student-support staff have YW enrollment materials
- Where feasible, support the transition of YW participants into CA school programming so that schools

can be deliberate about capturing program experiences in college and career planning

Other Workforce and Relevant Youth Development Programs: In addition to making connections to the Connecting Activities program, grantees should consider recruiting participants for participation in YouthWorks who are connected through other programs. The Commonwealth anticipates that applicant communities, in developing a local YouthWorks design, will consider connections with the following programs listed in the Table below.

In support of building these networks, Commonwealth Corporation will support making these connections on the state level.

Table: List of additional Program Resources

Program	Description and Applicable Links
WIOA Title I Youth services.	The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) youth program provides a wide variety of services, including subsidized jobs, for eligible low-income teens and young adults. YouthWorks youth are not required to be enrolled in WIOA. However, YouthWorks grantees may find significant value in supplementing the YouthWorks program with additional ‘wrap-around’ services funded by WIOA.
WIOA Title I Adult services	WIOA adult programs at the MassHire Career Centers may provide excellent supplemental services to youth employed under a YouthWorks grant. Local grantees may encourage youth who are at least 18 years of age to be enrolled as a MassHire Career Center member and provided with services to complement a YouthWorks program experience. Link: MassHire Career Centers Mass.gov
Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI)	SSYI is a program administered by the Executive Office and Health and Human Services and is operated in 14 cities. The program model offers intensive outreach, case management, trauma supports and behavioral health services, education, employability, and employment services to 17-24-year-old proven risk young adults. Local grantees may co-enroll youth who have been engaged in SSYI services, have a reduced risk level and are ready for a subsidized placement or career pathway program experience. Link: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/office-of-children-youth-and-family-programs
DTA/ TAFDC Teen Parenting Program (TPP).	A statewide network of TPPs are funded by DTA and are procured and administered by DCF. The goal of the TPP is to provide teen parents and their children a safe place to reside where they can gain the skills and knowledge necessary to become competent parents and lead productive, independent lives. YouthWorks partners should consider partnering with TPP’s to extend services and establish referral relationships. Additionally, TPP’s may be suitable places to complete the cohort-based work readiness workshops for these participants. Link: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/choose-a-tafdc-pathways-to-work-program .
MRC Pre-Employment Transition Services.	Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) supports students with disabilities ages 14-22 by providing relevant job readiness services such as job exploration counseling, work readiness training, work-based learning experiences, counseling in post-secondary education and self-advocacy. Connecting with MRC/Pre-ETS community providers can lead to solid referrals of eligible students who would benefit from the YouthWorks program and who are receiving additional supportive services that support successful outcomes in youth employment programming. Link: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0

Information Security Policy

Background: As part of Executive Order 504, the Governor has put into place a series of policies designed to safeguard the security, confidentiality, and integrity of public and personal data of the public. This includes information and data that is handled, collected, used, stored, processed, disposed, or disseminated in the process of providing services such as youth employment programs.

In its role as an agent of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce development, CommCorp has developed and put policies and controls in place to provide reasonable assurance that security objectives are addressed. Our written information security policy is part of a comprehensive program that ensures that we:

- Collect quantity of personal information and data reasonably needed to accomplish legitimate purpose
- Securely store and protect personal information and data against unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification, disclosure and loss
- Disclose personal information and data only on a need-to-know basis
- Destroy personal information and data as soon as it is no longer needed or required to be maintained under state or federal law
- Address administrative, technical, and physical safeguards

Executive Order 504 mandates that the protection and confidentiality of personal information and data be incorporated into all of CommCorp's contractual agreements, including YouthWorks. Here is an overview of what constitutes personal and confidential information:

Personal Information

Personal Information (PI) is defined in the Security Freezes and Notification of Data Breaches Statute (Massachusetts General Law 93H):

Resident's first name (or initial) and last name in combination with:

- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Driver's License (or state issued I.D.) number; or
- Financial Account Number

Personal Data

Personal data under Fair Information Practices Act (FIPA) is defined as:

Any information which, because of name, identifying number, mark, or description can be readily associated with an individual (except information that is contained within a public record).

Confidential Information

Confidential Information is defined as:

Personal financial information.

Competitive information from organizations (applications or proposals for grants or financing) Information CommCorp's clients deem to be confidential as part of contractual obligations; Wages and wage records for participants in programs administered by CommCorp

Grantee Responsibilities: The implementation of CommCorp's security policy requires that YouthWorks grantees take responsibility for meeting the standards of security and reasonably limiting access to youth participant files as well as securely maintaining administrative records for the required period.

Why does CommCorp require social security numbers as part of its reporting program?

CommCorp needs information about state-funded youth employment programs and individuals participating in such programs to report to the state on how well the whole program is working and whether it is meeting its goals. To find out if YouthWorks is meeting its goal of improving the employability skills of young people placed at risk, we want to find out what percentage of participants are placed at risk by

matching them with data from state agencies such as the Department of Youth Services, Department of Children and Families, Department of Transitional Assistance, Mass Rehab Commission and MassHealth. We also want to evaluate whether program activities are affecting the future educational and employment trajectories of young people involved.

The ability to show the number of participants who take part in youth employment programs through YouthWorks and WIOA and who are also enrolled in other state agency youth programs will help programs directors and others make a case to request funding for future subsidized employment programs.

Commonwealth Corporation works hard to protect program participants' social security numbers. Furthermore, we do not use social security numbers to report on individual youth participants; reports are produced for whole annual cohorts of program participants.

Confidentiality Reporting

Program operators must have all YouthWorks participants complete and sign the Confidentiality Statement and Release Form which can be found in the YouthWorks porta to ensure that participants have authorized the release of participant record data including Social Security numbers. This information is used to support ongoing efforts to measure the impact of the YouthWorks program, including how many YW participants enter the labor market after their YW placements. This form will become part of the youth file upon enrollment into the program.

Site Visits, Quality Assurance, and Monitoring

CommCorp staff may arrange site visits and/or monitoring visits during programming to observe program activities, interview staff, youth participants, and employers in addition to meet with the finance team. The purpose of site visits is to learn more about program models, get insights into youth and employer experiences and provide support in overall quality assurance and effective program implementation. **Local programmers will be notified about site visits prior to the start of programs.**

The purpose of monitoring visits is to ensure fiscal compliance and documentation. Visits may be in-person or virtual for YouthWorks grantees. A checklist will be provided in preparation for the visit. These visits will be organized with the fiscal teams / individuals responsible for the fiduciary management of the grant.

Divisional Policies Governing Security and Confidentiality of Information Assets

Description of Information Asset	CommCorp Staff Security Responsibilities	Grantee Responsibilities	Records Retention Requirements
Youth Pathways – YouthWorks, DYS LEAD, and other grant programs. Intake forms and other information managed by local grantee to determine eligibility of youth to participate in YouthWorks program. Such forms are paper files, and could include information that shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income level of youth or parents; • authorization or permission forms; • SSN or SASID of youth; • enrollment status in partner program (DYS, DCF, TANF); • ability status 	CommCorp does not collect or maintain copies of these records on a regular basis. CommCorp staff may collect copies of some of these files when conducting a program compliance monitoring. If so, records shall be kept in a locked file cabinet accessible only to monitoring and program staff.	Grantees must limit access to files by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping files in locked filing cabinets; • providing technical assistance/training to all staff regarding their security obligations; • obtaining signed agreements by all staff that they understand their security obligations. Grantees that use program partners and other subcontractors shall require all such organizations to meet the standard of security. Grantees may not delegate or transfer security obligations to other subcontractors and remain legally responsible for compliance.	Grantees are required to maintain administrative records for a period of seven years. Grantees may transfer data to digital or microfilm format or scan into PDF format and destroy paper files three years from the date of final program service.
Youth Pathways – YouthWorks, DYS LEAD, and other grant programs. Local timesheet and payroll processing data that supports the award of wages and stipends to youth for program participation. Because of FICA and other tax issues, such payroll data necessarily includes a named individual and their SSN.	CommCorp will collect copies of these records on a regular basis. CommCorp staff may collect copies of some of these files when conducting a program compliance monitoring. If so, records shall be kept in a locked file cabinet accessible only to monitoring and program staff, or in a locked office.	Grantees must limit access to files by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping files in locked filing cabinets; • providing training to all staff regarding their security obligations; • obtaining signed agreements by all staff that they understand their security obligations. Grantees that use program partners and other subcontractors shall require all such organizations to meet the standard of security. Grantees may not delegate or transfer security obligations to other subcontractors and remain legally responsible for compliance.	Grantees are required to maintain payroll records for a period established by the IRS for tax reporting by employers and taxpayers (three full tax years).
Description of Information Asset	CommCorp Staff Security Responsibilities	Grantee Responsibilities	Records Retention Requirement
Youth Pathways – YouthWorks, DYS LEAD, and other grant programs. Individual participant records on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSNs are ‘grayed out’ at data entry through a masking process on the database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSNs are ‘grayed out’ at data entry. • SSNs are accessible to only a reasonable number of local program managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local grantees shall complete all local data entry by a fixed deadline related to each annual

<p>CommCorp's YouthWorks reporting database.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSNs are accessible to CommCorp staff members who process and access data in the Database. • Export files of youth records created to support internal data analysis should not include a full SSN. • One copy of a full program year of youth records shall be exported with SSNs and archived in a central location maintained by CRE staff on the L-Drive. • Data manipulations that involve the use of SSN (e.g., data matching agreements where the SSN is used as a matching identifier) may be executed in-house or through external partners. • All such projects shall be covered by confidentiality agreements and contracts. Actual data transfers may not be accomplished via e-mail, web posting, or by unprotected flash drive. Data may only be transported by CD/DVD, encrypted flash drive, or by FTP link. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical export files of youth records used for statistical or evaluative purposes may not include a full SSN. 	<p>program. After that date, CommCorp may remove access to the database.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data files shall be archived for up to seven years and thereafter destroyed. • Where potential for long-term data matching exists, CommCorp may opt to maintain data files for longer than seven years.
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SECTION VI: GRANT ADMINISTRATION AND INVOICING

Section Overview: Section VI describes the process for submitting cash requests, the collection of data, final reports, acceptable documentation for expenses, and expectations for grantees regarding grant administration.

Subsections:

- FISCAL STATUS REPORTS AND CASH REQUESTS
- DOCUMENTATION FOR EXPENSES
- EXPECTATIONS FOR GRANT ADMINISTRATION
- PARTICIPANT PROGRAM REPORTING

Relevant Best Practice from YouthWorks Program Assessment:

#8. Effectively manage, track and report resources and program data.

Fiscal Status Reports and Invoices

Grantees may request reimbursement under an executed contract by submitting a Commonwealth Corporation Fiscal Status Report (FSR). Below are important details regarding the FSR:

- A customized FSR will be issued to the grantee's fiscal agent electronically
- Invoices will be accepted weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly – all regions should plan to submit, at least, monthly as indicated in the contract Scope of Work (SOW)
- All invoices and FSRs must be signed by the authorized signatory on file

Invoices may be submitted by email to youthworks@commcorp.org; grantee must maintain hard copy containing an original signature for the purposes of monitoring

- Operators are required to maintain and make available for review by Commonwealth Corporation staff upon request:
 - Documentation and accounting procedures for expenditures that reconcile to the information submitted in invoicing

Operators are required to maintain and make available for review by Commonwealth Corporation staff upon request, documentation and accounting procedures for expenditures that reconcile the information submitted. All invoices and FSRs must be emailed from or with an authorized signatory included in the communication.

Note: The Fiscal Status Report asks each grantee to identify the amount of funds requested in the invoice that supports program activity taking place within the contracting period indicated on the FSR. The reason for this procedure is related to ensuring accuracy in determining the economic value of the organization - both Commonwealth Corporation and local grantees.

The table below lists the types of documentation acceptable for potential categories of expense.

Documentation for Expenses	
INVOICED EXPENSES	
Line Item	Acceptable Documentation
All Project Staff Salaries (including program management, case Management, job development, data entry, youth recruitment and all other staff)	Proof of salary such as payroll report and register or timesheets that detail the actual hours worked on the project.
Project Staff Fringe	Documentation of the basis for the Fringe calculation
Staff Travel	Actual Costs - Copy of Travel Voucher/Expense Reimbursement Form and receipts. The mileage rate is \$.65 per mile.
Advertising/Marketing	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice

Office Supplies and Materials	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice. If part of a Cost Allocation: A copy of Cost Allocation Plan showing basis for the charges and documentation of the monthly allocation calculation.
Communications/Telephone	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice. If part of a Cost Allocation: a copy of Cost Allocation Plan showing the basis for the charges and documentation of the monthly allocation calculation.
Equipment Rental & Maintenance	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice. If part of a Cost Allocation: a copy of Cost Allocation Plan showing the basis for the charges and documentation of the monthly allocation calculation.
Postage/Mailings	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice. If part of a Cost Allocation: a copy of Cost Allocation Plan showing the basis for the charges and documentation of the monthly allocation calculation.
Project Rent	If stand-alone space: copy of lease pages showing rent. If part of a Cost Allocation: a copy of page from Cost Allocation Plan showing basis for the charges plus an explanation of the apportionment to the project.
Participant Support Services	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice
Consultants	Actual Costs - Copy of itemized, signed invoice from consultant
Evaluation	Actual Costs - Copy of itemized, signed invoice from consultant
Training/Education Supplies/Materials	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice
Printing/Reproduction	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice
Youth Incentives	Actual Costs - Copy of receipt or invoice

Expectations for Grant Administration

Commonwealth Corporation relies on accurate and up-to-date reporting to:

- Identify regional support needs and provide grantees with timely and effective support
- Verify that participants are engaged in appropriate and relevant program activities
- Provide stakeholders with information about the impact of public investment in YouthWorks programs
- Ensure that grantees are meeting contractual obligations

Reporting consists of participant-level data, narrative reports, and invoices.

We recognize that improving these administrative steps may require grantees to work more intensively with local program sub-grantees. We encourage greater communication and stronger oversight from the beginning of the application period so that grantees and their subcontractors can respond with administrative improvements.

Participant Program Reporting

Grantees are required to report individual YouthWorks participant record data, including social security numbers, that will enable the state to develop program profiles, statistical reports on the characteristics of participating youth and employers, and calculate data on program wage levels as part of the process of

reporting program outcomes to the Massachusetts Legislature. **Grantees must use the free on-line YouthWorks database (<https://www.youthworksdata.org/>) for participant applications, program development and outcomes reporting.**

Please note: This database is used to support YouthWorks program management and reporting to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the Legislature. Grantees must record **ONLY** information about youth and young adults who are participating in YouthWorks programs. Information about participants in other (non-YouthWorks) programs should NOT be included in the database.

All final record data for the year must be submitted prior to **July 15, 2024**. The final invoice for the year will not be paid prior to being completed database submission.

In addition to data entry, grantees are required to complete short narrative reports. The format for these narrative reports will be provided to grantees.

Reporting Periods		
Report	For Activities Conducted During This Period	Data Entry and Narrative Reports Due Dates
Report #1	June 1, 2023 - July 15, 2023	July 29, 2023
Report #2 Participant Completion Report	July 16, 2023 - September 3, 2023	September 15, 2023
Report #3	September 4, 2023 - December 31, 2023	January 16, 2024
Report #4	January 1, 2024 - April 30, 2024	May 15, 2024
Final Report	Entire Year	July 15, 2024

Other, important, program related dates can be found here: <https://commcorp.org/ywevents/>

SECTION VII: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DOCUMENTING PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES

Section Overview: Section VII denotes the increasing importance of collection of data on YouthWorks outcomes and the process for documentation, deadlines for submitting YouthWorks participant record data and final narrative reports, as well as guidelines for working with the media and press.

Subsections:

- MEASURING AND DOCUMENTING YOUTHWORKS OUTCOMES
- YOUTHWORKS PARTICIPANT RECORD DATA
- NARRATIVE FINAL REPORT
- MEDIA/PRESS

Relevant Best Practices from YouthWorks Program

Assessment:

- #9- Define and support program outcomes beyond participation and completion rates.
- #10- Continuously collect evidence and feedback to conduct ongoing evaluations and plans for improvement
- #11- Support program innovations by contributing to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of emerging practices
- #12- Use traditional and social media strategies to raise awareness of the program opportunities and outcomes
- #13- Effectively manage, track and report resources and program data

Measuring and Documenting YouthWorks Outcomes

Part of CommCorp’s administration of YouthWorks includes developing an annual report of program accomplishments. CommCorp combines and organizes program data for members of the state legislators that contains narrative snapshots of YouthWorks participants. To document all the accomplishments of YouthWorks and continue to develop the program, it is important for all regions to continue to augment their data collection and focus on reporting employment, education/training and skill gain outcomes. The table below indicates the required data points and data collection tools and outlines which tools and outcomes are required of various programmatic components and approaches.

The accomplishment and outcomes documentation are part of the **data-driven program improvement process that programs are required to participate in** which include a review of program performance in terms of key data points like enrollment, completion rates, participant outcome trends and program performance.

To support local programs in entering annual data, the **YouthWorks Database User Guide** is available as a resource. Programs that use different databases must learn how to import participant data into the YouthWorks Database.

Table- Data Points/Tools and Descriptions

Data Point/ Tool	Description and Additional Details
Required Across all Tiers	
Participant Social Security Numbers	CommCorp conducted wage record match looks at workforce participation and annual earnings for participants in the two years following YW participation.
Participant-level demographic information, wage, and hours of core program services	The database user guide will contain a full list of fields and data entry parameters. In addition to basic participant-level demographic information, programs will need to record which program services participants receive, hours of work and training completed, and information about completion status.

Participant Case Study questionnaire (to be completed with a small strategic subset)	For each tier programs must complete this for one to two participants depending on size of program. The questionnaire will be built into the new database and updated each year in mid-March.
Required in Select Tiers	
Massachusetts Work Based Learning Plan	Required if the participant receives at least 60 hours of subsidized work placement as part of the learning model. Integrated into the new YouthWorks database. For more information about the MA WBLP, please go to: http://skillspages.com/masswbl/
Certification pass or completion status for a program-sponsored credential ⁶	Required in the Career Pathway Programming and support models that utilize industry credentials. Programs will need to specify the type of credential and indicate whether participants passed or not. There will also be an opportunity to provide additional information in a comment field. For example, if a participant fails on a first attempt, but is scheduled for re-test, programs should note this.
Programs Should Select At least One for each Tier	
<i>Signal Success</i> Competency-Based Portfolio	An updated version of the <i>Signal Success</i> portfolios will align to each of the tiered versions of the curriculum. Participants can complete the portfolio in the traditional paper format, and the database will include an online option as well.
Employment status upon completion of program	The YouthWorks database will include opportunities to record when participants obtain employment at the end of programming. To select this outcome option, programs must also establish the time period in which they are going to track this information. Time periods shorter than a month from the last day of program services will not be considered. Also, within the Early and Career Trajectory tier, programs may elect to track this datapoint within a strategic subset. For example, participants 18 and over or participants not enrolled in school.
Returning Participant Analysis Protocol	The YouthWorks Database will include an automated report that will allow programs to see a list of all participants who have participated in YouthWorks programming more than once along with basic information

	<p>about each round of participation, like placement description, hours completed of program activities, WBLP scores, additional skill gain measures. Programs using this outcome measure will be asked to complete an analysis of this automated report in which they indicate whether the participant made distinct progress from one season of participation to the next.</p> <p>Examples of progression include stronger attendance and completion, increased responsibility at worksite, transition to</p>
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	career-trajectory placement or training, increased skill gain.
Program Connection Analysis Protocol (tracks progression to WIOA and Connecting Activities)	Programs will be asked to identify which participants they intend to connect with additional services like WIOA youth and young adult and Connecting Activities. This must be provided at the end of each program season. The YouthWorks database will offer a report that programs can use to recall this list at the start of the next program season or any time in between to record basic details about whether a participant did indeed participate in WIOA or Connecting Activities. In the case of Connecting Activities, the YouthWorks database will also allow programs that enter data in the CA database to access this information for YW participants.
Employer Satisfaction Survey	Available in paper and online formats, this short survey tool will allow programs to capture and respond to employer experiences. Programs selecting this option must distribute the survey to all active employers and achieve at least a 40% return rate.

By collecting and reporting a more comprehensive set of data, the YouthWorks program will be able to report on a wider range of positive outcomes. Some examples are listed below:

- Participants have increased labor market participation in the two years following their YouthWorks program experience
- Participants complete applicable core program components (*Signal Success* work readiness training, work placement, work-based learning experience, occupational training, etc.)
- Participants improve employability or soft skills
- Participants demonstrate knowledge of careers and the education, training and skills required to progress through a chosen career path
- Participants maintain high levels of workplace engagement
- Program provides first paid work experiences to youth and young adults

Narrative Final Report

Grantees are required to submit narrative final reports using the form in the YouthWorks database by July 15, 2023. A list of required data elements will be provided.

Media/Press

The Commonwealth receives a great number of requests for publicity, particularly about youth programs. To respond to these requests, and to ensure we have the most current information, program managers are asked to submit copies of any publicity regarding youth programs – newspaper stories, newsletter articles, etc. A sample photo release form is available in the YouthWorks Portal.

We welcome profiles and photos of young people served in YouthWorks programs.

State and local media are often interested in stories about job programs. Please take time to ensure that local reporters acknowledge YouthWorks as a funding source where appropriate.

This acknowledgement is important because we want local leaders and legislators to understand that large numbers of local youth jobs programs/placements are a direct result of YouthWorks funding--YouthWorks

is often the primary source of funding in many cities. Without referencing the state funding source, legislators may not see the impact of the dollars- making future funding more difficult.

Press or Media - YW partners issuing press releases or internal newsletters, video, or using other press or media to announce or provide information about the YouthWorks program or activities undertaken in relation to this state-funded program must include the following statement:

This project is funded by the YouthWorks program through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. The program is administered by the Commonwealth Corporation

SECTION VIII: APPENDICES

[Appendix 1: YouthWorks Household Income Eligibility Guide](#)

[Appendix 2: YouthWorks Program Assessment](#)

Appendix 1

2022 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous United States

Family Size	Annual Income		Monthly Income	
	Poverty Level	200% Poverty Level	Poverty Level	200% Poverty Level
1	\$13,590	\$27,180	\$1,133	\$2,265
2	\$18,310	\$36,620	\$1,526	\$3,052
3	\$23,030	\$46,060	\$1,919	\$3,838
4	\$27,750	\$55,500	\$2,313	\$4,625
5	\$32,470	\$64,940	\$2,706	\$5,412
6	\$37,190	\$74,380	\$3,099	\$6,198
7	\$41,910	\$83,820	\$3,493	\$6,985
8	\$46,630	\$93,260	\$3,886	\$7,772
Each additional family member:	\$4,720	\$9,440	\$393	\$787

Note: Poverty guidelines are updated periodically in the *Federal Register* by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. § 9902(2). The guidelines for 2022 went into effect as of January 12, 2022. The Federal Register notice was published January 21, 2022 and can be viewed at :

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/01/21/2022-01166/annual-update-of-the-hhs-poverty-guidelines>

Appendix 2

YouthWorks Eligibility Self-Attestation Form



Eligibility Self-Attestation Form

Applicant Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

☐ I certify that I and my household meet the income eligibility guidelines for the YouthWorks Program.
Complete section A or B to provide support for this statement.

☐ I certify that I meet the eligibility guidelines of the YouthWorks Program, as an individual who identifies with one of the following categories and can provide documentation:

☐ Identify as a LGBTQIA+ community

☐ Limited English Language fluency

☐ Court-involved youth (juvenile arrest, gang-involved, probation, DYS, CRA)

☐ Foster Youth (DCF)

☐ Former foster care youth (DCF)

☐ Teen Parent

☐ Currently homeless or runaway youth

☐ Child of a single, working parent

☐ Individual with a disability

Section A:

☐ I certify that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, I received a free or reduced lunch benefit at my current school or recent.

Name of School: _____

Section B:

If you know, please initial the row of the chart below that describes your current household income.	Number of People in my household	Annual Income Less than:	Monthly Income Less than:
	1	\$27,180	\$2,265
	2	\$36,620	\$3,052
	3	\$46,060	\$3,838
	4	\$55,500	\$4,625
	5	\$64,940	\$5,412
	6	\$74,380	\$6,198
	7	\$83,820	\$6,985
	8	\$93,260	\$7,772
If you have over 8 people in your household, please complete the row below.			
My Initials	Number of people in my household	Annual Income	Monthly Income

Signature: _____ Date: _____